

"Who has not heard of the vale of Cashmere,
With its roses, the brightest that earth ever gave,
Its temples, and grottos, and fountains as clear
As the love lighted eyes that hang over the wave.

"Oh! to see it at sunset—when warm o'er the lakes,
Its splendour at parting a summer eve throws,
Like a bride full of blushes when lingering to take
A last look at the mirror at night ere she goes.

"When the shrines through the foliage are gleaming
half shown,
And each hallows the hour by some rites of its own,
Here the music of prayer from a minaret swells,
Here the magian his urn, full of perfume is swing-
ing,
And here at the altar a zone of sweet bells
Round the waist of some fair Indian dancer is
ringing.

"Or to see it by moonlight—when mellowly shines
The light o'er its palaces, gardens and shrines;
When the waterfalls gleam like a quick fall of stars,
And the nightingale's hymn from the Isle of Chemars
Is broken by laughs and light echoes of feet,
From the cool shining walks where the young people
meet.

"Or the morn, when the magic of daylight awakes
A new wonder each minute, as slowly it breaks,
Hills, cupolas, fountains, call'd forth every one
Out of darkness, as if just born of the sun.

"When the spirit of fragrance is up with the day,
From his harem of night flowers stealing away;
And the wind full of wantonness wooes like a lover
The young aspen trees till they tremble all over.

"When the East is as warm as the light of first
hopes,
And day with its banner of radiance unfurl'd,
Shines in through the mountainous portals that open
Sublime, from the valley of bliss to the world."

This "floweret of a hundred leaves" in the
East,

"The land of the myrtle, the rose and the vine,
Where the fields ever bloom, and the skies ever shine,"

is an object of peculiar esteem, and the acceptance
of it when offered is a token of the highest favour.
Byron introduces a passage illustrating the prac-
tice in the "Bride of Abydos," in Zuleika's at-
tempt to soothe Selim's mind.

"What sullen yet? it must not be—

Oh! gentle Selim this from thee!"

She saw in curious order set

The fairest flowers of Eastern land—

He loved them once; may touch them yet,

If offered by Zuleika's hand.—

The childish thought was hardly breath'd

Before the rose was pluck'd and wreath'd,

The next fond moment saw her seat

Her fairy form at Selim's feet.

"What, not receive my foolish flower?

Nay, then, indeed, I am unblest;

On me can thus thy forehead lower,

And know'st thou not who loves thee best.

Oh! Selim, dear, oh! more than dearest,

Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest: